

Vol. 3: Apr-June 2016

QUARTERLY REPORT Q2 2016

NPCA MISSION, VISION & VALUE STATEMENTS

“The objects of an authority are to establish and undertake, in the area over which it has jurisdiction, a program designed to further the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources other than gas, oil, coal and minerals.”

R.S.O. 1990, c.C.27 s.20

Responsibilities of NPCA include;

- Floodplain Management (1970's)
- Hazard Land Management including the management of local areas susceptible to flood and erosion risks (1983)
- Great Lake Shoreline management (1988)
- Ontario Regulation 155/06 NPCA: Regulation of Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses (2006)

MISSION

To manage our watershed's natural resources by balancing environmental, community, and economic needs.

VISION

Balancing conservation and sustainable development for future generations by engaging landowners, stakeholders and communities through collaboration.

VALUES

To the landowners, stakeholders and communities affected by our actions, we value:

1. A sustainable balance between environmental conservation, economic growth and agricultural prosperity.
2. Clear and respectful communication.
3. Integrity, fairness and sensitivity to all impacted by our actions decisions.
4. Creativity and innovation in service delivery to clients.
5. Transparency, accountability and quality in our services.
6. Pragmatic solution oriented approaches to decision making.
7. A respectful work environment and professional development.

About us	4
Adminstration	5
Research & Science	6
Community	7
Our Land	9
The Numbers	10



Welcome to our Quarterly Report. Each year we will endeavour to produce quarterly reports for our funders, stakeholders and communities we are proud to serve. As laid out in our Strategic Plan, we are making a concerted effort to be more transparent and hope that these reports are helpful in your understanding of our work.



Carmen D'Angelo, BSc, MPA
Chief Administrative Officer



Bruce Timms, P.Eng
Chair, Board of Directors

ABOUT US

The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) was established on April 30, 1959, under the Conservation Authorities Act, and serves approximately half a million people in the Niagara Peninsula Watershed, encompassing the entire Niagara Region and portions of the City of Hamilton and Haldimand County. The NPCA strives to manage the impact of human activities, urban growth and rural activities on its watershed.

The Niagara Peninsula is one of the most complex watersheds in the Province. It includes lands drained by the Niagara River, Twenty Mile Creek, the Welland River, the Welland Canal, Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. NPCA programs focus on the conservation and preservation of the unique environment, and initiatives that help keep people and their property safe from flooding and erosion while keeping our drinking water clean and safe.

The NPCA's ongoing commitment to land stewardship is reflected in the management of over 2,870 hectares of unique natural areas. These lands are held in public trust, allowing the people of Niagara, Hamilton, and Haldimand County to enjoy its distinctive natural heritage at 39 Conservation Areas, each offering diverse recreational and educational opportunities and a place for both children and adults to experience nature's beauty.



ADMINISTRATION

Staff attended the **Conservation Authorities Act Review** session in London where NPCA was recognized for implementing best management practices that meet the objective of open, transparent and accountable administration. NPCA identified the best management practices as:

1. Community Liaison Advisory Committee
2. Customer Service Charter
3. Dispute Resolution System
4. Budget: financial statements and monthly expenses posted on the website and Board for review
5. Quarterly communications reports distributed to all local municipalities
6. Live streaming of Board meetings
7. Orientation for Board Members at the start of the term
8. Streamline permit processing with a 30-day benchmark
9. Open door policy of the CAO and Chair for all community members who wish to meet with NPCA in partnership with non-government organizations
10. Memorandum of Understanding with the three funding Municipalities: Niagara Region, Haldimand County and the City of Hamilton

This reflects that the NPCA is ahead of the mark. In fact, NPCA's best management practices are amongst the priorities currently being communicated by the Province as part of the Conservation Authorities Act Review.

The Corporate Services team unveiled a new internal brand to aide in bringing teams together for the common goal of the organization. As well, a newly developed **Customer Service Charter** to formalize customer service excellence throughout the organization. The charter aligns with the NPCA Strategic Plan, which states that the NPCA "will deliver a pragmatic customer-friendly feel in resolving complex regulatory issues, a refocused conservation/sustainable growth mandate, and an ambitious change agenda moving forward."

NIAGARA PENINSULA CONSERVATION AUTHORITY





RESEARCH & SCIENCE

The NPCA collects and analyzes hundreds of water samples each year from the streams, rivers and groundwater resources within the watershed. From this information, the NPCA can identify sources of pollution, track water quality trends, and help to assess and direct NPCA programs. The monitoring and reporting of watershed conditions is a critical component of the NPCA. As well, the long-term data collected serves as a baseline by which to compare the success of all the various water quality improvement initiatives being undertaken within the watershed. The **NPCA Water Quality Monitoring Program 2016 Annual Report** is available on the NPCA website at: npca.ca/water-quality

In mid-May, NPCA staff gave a presentation to a Chinese government delegation from the province of Shanghai. These gentlemen were from the provincial ministry responsible for water quality, treatment, pollution abatement, and flood control.

As a result of rapid development in their province, they were in Southern Ontario on a fact-finding tour to speak with various Ontario provincial ministries (including the NPCA) to discuss our local regulations, processes, governance, and funding models. The ultimate goal is to improve how they conduct their operations by learning from the experience of other water resource managers.

The 2015 **Hamilton International Airport (HIA) Biological Assessment of Water Quality** was submitted to staff of the HIA on May 4, 2015. This annual study continues to demonstrate East HIA Creek is more impacted than West HIA Creek. The main stressors are likely stormwater runoff containing road salt and a mixture of contaminants which are adversely affecting the aquatic ecosystems of these creeks.



COMMUNITY

The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Foundation media release about the **Comfort Maple pens** for sale was picked up nationally and featured in papers from Winnipeg, Kelowna, Waterloo, national newspapers and throughout our watershed. The response thus far has been very positive with nearly 100 pen orders occurring. Marv Ens, the volunteer handcrafts each pen, has graciously dedicated more time to producing them as sales have been overwhelming. Net proceeds go to the Foundation and in-turn support conservation projects.

At the June Board of Directors meeting, the NPCA was presented with funding grants from the **RBC Blue Water Fund** for the Niagara Children's Water Festival, and from **Ontario Power Generation** for Niagara Envirothon and the Niagara Children's Water Festival. Also in attendance was **Marv Ens** who presented Chairman Bruce Timms with a gavel made from the wood of the Comfort Maple.

On May 7, 2016, the **Glanbrook Conservation Committee** held a volunteer public opportunity to remove the invasive **Garlic Mustard** from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. The staff Ecologist assisted at the event, providing an overview of the species

and ecosystem and technique for removal. 19 volunteers assisted removing 17 garbage bags full of garlic mustard, to assist in maintaining a more native environment. The GCC also provided a BBQ for all the participating volunteers follow the garlic mustard removal.

Central Public School in Grimsby participated in the **Yellow Fish Road** Program on April 19th. A total of 143 students engaged in painting yellow fish next to storm drains to remind the public that what goes down storm water drains goes into local water bodies untreated. Volunteers also distribute fish-shaped hangers to neighbours to explain the program.

Volunteers have been recruited to monitor the **bluebird boxes at Ball's Falls Conservation Area**. A small group of five to six volunteers have agreed to monitor them on a weekly basis to discourage house sparrows from building nests in these homes. Volunteers will record bluebird nests, number of eggs, etc. This information will be shared with the NPCA Ecologist for future management decisions.



COMMUNITY (CONTINUED)

The **Welland River Floodplain Mapping** Consultation Summary Report is posted on the project website (www.wellandriver.ca). During the month of June, Round #2 Public Information Sessions were held across the watershed to explain the technical aspects of the floodplain modelling. These meetings addressed any outstanding topics and sought public input on any new issues. As was the case for the first round, notifications were sent by direct mail to all landowners within 500 metres on either side of the Welland River. Also, notifications were included in a half-page newspaper advertisement in Niagara This Week, forwarded to all municipal offices, emailed to those who registered at previous events or added their contact information on the project website, and included on NPCA's website and the project homepage

In May, the NPCA hosted the **Children's Water Festival**. It was an incredible display of cooperation between organizations and volunteers to teach local children about water conservation, science, protection, and technology. The Water Festival

saw **over 100 volunteers** per day come to support this event including area high school students were bused into Ball's Falls to assist with the event. Volunteers assisted with the set-up and tear down of the Water Festival, being lead presenters, lunch tent coordinators, registration desk, and safety.

After winning the local event at the **Niagara Envirothon** on May 4th, five students from Sir Winston Churchill High School in St. Catharines represented Niagara at the Ontario Envirothon Championship from May 29-June 1, 2016, at Fleming College. The team had a great experience over the four days but has not received their final ranking at this time.

Stratus Vineyards partnered with the NPCA to plant trees on one of their restoration properties in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Stratus brought 20 of their staff to assist the restoration team to plant over 500 bare-root trees on private property on Concession 7. This event marked the third year that Stratus has participated in volunteer activities with the NPCA.



OUR LAND

On National Aboriginal Day, June 21, the Niagara Regional Native Centre (NRNC) and the Niagara Catholic District School Board (NCDSB) marked the day, with the NPCA, by signing a historic partnership on an innovative outdoor high school program conducted at **St. Johns Valley Centre Conservation Area**. Students presented on how the unique learning environment had helped them better themselves and how thankful they are for the opportunity. The NPCA is proud to support these initiatives and accredited outdoor educational programming with the NCDSB and the NRNC at its Conservation lands.

At noon on April 23, the **St. Johns Conservation Area** pond opened for fishing. Over 100 people attended the first few hours of opening day. The site remains open for fishing during daylight hours until the fishing season closes on September 30. Ontario fishing regulations apply at the conservation area where all anglers must have a fishing licence and follow the Ontario fishing regulations.

Capital Projects at both **Long Beach and Chippawa Creek Conservation Areas** have been completed. The Refurbishment of the Main Comfort Station and the new fence around the Bio-Filter is now complete at Chippawa Creek. Tree trimming and

dead branch removal have been completed at Long Beach. Staff commenced Ash Tree stump removal in April. The building of the new compound is underway on the North side of Chippawa Creek, around the workshop area.

Staff have finalized a funding agreement for **Smith-Ness Conservation Area**, to cover a portion of the meadow site restoration plan to be completed this year. This agreement includes 1.6 hectares of tall grass areas to be maintained for five years. The tall grass and the remaining meadow area will provide areas of tall grass, as well as cold season forbs and grasses for a variety of species (birds, insects, etc.) over the long term.

Ducks Unlimited have installed a new water-control structure at **Mud Lake Conservation Area**. Their contractor took out the old structure and installed the new one in approximately five days. The water level in Mud Lake has not been affected. Everything is working properly and this project was fully-funded by Ducks Unlimited. There was little to no effect on the property or its ability to be enjoyed by the public.

THE NUMBERS

\$12,711,912 2016 Gross Approved
Budget

Total Expenditure to
Date **\$4,849,400**

164

Planning Act Applications
Reviewed (YTD)

155

Building Permit
Applications Reviewed
(YTD)

116

Work Permits Issued
(YTD)

163 Hunting Permits
Issued (YTD)

127 Site Visits by Watershed
Ecological Technicians (YTD)

48 Property Information
Requests (YTD)



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